

Amendments to the Claims

The Claim listing below will replace all prior versions of the Claims in the application.

Claim Listing

1 (currently amended). A machine-implemented method comprising:

loading in a machine a bus-to-network device driver during a machine boot, the bus-to-network device driver capable of distinguishing between received responses to machine bus commands and other network traffic, the other network traffic to be passed through a virtual network driver provided to an operating system protocol stack of the machine, the machine bus commands to be passed through a storage protocol driver, the received responses to the machine bus commands being received by the machine via a network, both the other network traffic and the received responses to be passed through the bus-to-network device driver, the bus-to-network device driver to select one of the virtual network driver and the storage protocol driver to which to pass the received responses and the other network traffic based upon respective hardware addresses associated with the storage protocol driver and the virtual network driver corresponding to a network driver.

2 (currently amended). The method of claim 1, the bus-to-network device driver further capable of sending machine bus commands over the a network and providing access to the network for the virtual network driver, and wherein said loading the bus-to-network device driver occurs in response to an operating system load of bus drivers.

3 (original). The method of claim 2, wherein the bus-to-network device driver comprises an iSCSI driver, and the operating system load of bus drivers comprises the operating system load of SCSI drivers.

4 (currently amended). The method of claim 1, wherein said loading the bus-to-network device driver comprises:

loading a first bus-to-network driver that controls a network device; and

loading a second bus-to-network driver that encapsulates the machine bus commands, includes a network stack and interfaces with the a network through the first bus-to-network driver.

5 (currently amended). The method of claim 1, further comprising loading the virtual network driver capable of communicating with the a network through the bus-to-network device driver.

6 (currently amended). The method of claim 5, further comprising disabling the virtual network driver, said disabling cutting off general purpose network traffic but having no effect on the bus-to-network device driver's sending of the machine bus commands.

7 (currently amended). The method of claim 5, further comprising:

engaging the bus-to-network device driver to perform block storage of data to a storage target over the network using a connectionless packet-switched communication protocol; and

engaging the virtual network driver to direct general purpose network traffic over the network.

8 (original). The method of claim 7, wherein the general purpose network traffic comprises TCP/IP traffic.

Claim 9 (cancelled).

10 (currently amended). The method of claim 1 9, wherein the hardware addresses comprise MAC addresses.

Claim 11 (cancelled).

12 (original). The method of claim 1, further comprising:

installing an operating system to a storage target; and

booting the operating system from the storage target, said loading occurring during said booting.

13 (original). The method of claim 1, wherein the bus-to-network device driver comprises a portion of a boot loader.

14 (original). The method of claim 1, wherein said loading comprises loading the bus-to-network device driver during multiple machine boots of multiple data processing machines.

15 (original). The method of claim 14, wherein the multiple data processing machines comprise at least one modular platform.

16 (currently amended). An apparatus comprising:

a network device;

a bus-to-network device driver that operates the network device and supports booting to a remote boot device, the bus-to-network device driver capable of distinguishing between received responses to machine bus commands and general purpose network traffic; and

a virtual network driver that communicates with the network device through the device driver, presents itself to an operating system protocol stack as a network device driver that operates the network device, and supports the general purpose network traffic;

the general network traffic to be passed through the virtual network driver, the machine bus commands to be passed through a storage protocol driver, the received responses to the machine bus commands being received via a network, both the general purpose network traffic and the received responses to be passed through the bus-to-network device driver, the bus-to-network device driver to select one of the virtual network driver and the storage protocol driver to which to pass the received responses and the general purpose network traffic based upon respective hardware addresses associated with the storage protocol driver and the virtual network driver.

17 (currently amended). The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the ~~device driver comprises~~ a bus-to-network driver is loaded during booting in response to an operating system load of bus drivers.

18 (currently amended). The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the bus-to-network device driver further comprises a hardware driver that operates the network device, and the bus-to-network driver communicates with the network device through the hardware driver and presents itself as a bus driver to the operating system.

19 (original). The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the bus-to-network driver comprises an iSCSI driver that presents itself as a SCSI driver to the operating system.

20 (currently amended). The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the hardware driver discriminates between iSCSI traffic and the general purpose network traffic based on the hardware addresses.

21 (original). The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the hardware addresses comprise MAC addresses.

22 (original). The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the network device comprises a network interface card.

23 (original). The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the device driver comprises a portion of code tangibly embodied in an option ROM of the network interface card.

Claims 24 to 36 (cancelled).